



# STORIES of HOPE

## UGANDA

### Empowering Youth to Say No to Transactional Sex



This illustration was featured in print materials about transactional sex from the first phase of the PEPFAR-supported Y.E.A.H. program.

*The radio series promotes abstinence, calling on youth to set long-term goals and not to compromise these goals for material gain.*



Uganda's Young Empowered And Healthy (Y.E.A.H) initiative is a multi-channel communication program for young people that combines mass media, person-to-person dialogue and community media. Y.E.A.H. is designed to help reduce the incidence of HIV and early pregnancy and increase the number of young people who complete primary education and beyond.

The U.S. President's Emergency Plan for AIDS Relief (Emergency Plan/PEPFAR) supported efforts to establish Y.E.A.H.'s management structure and to organize its first three years of activities. The management structure maximizes participation and ownership by young people and all stakeholders in planning, implementation, and monitoring and evaluation. The program is designed and implemented by a coalition of Ugandan organizations and Young People's Advisory Groups under the auspices of the Uganda AIDS Commission HIV/AIDS Partnership, in partnership with the Johns Hopkins University Health Communication Partnership.

The first phase of the initiative is now underway and focuses on sexual exploitation, including transactional sex. Transactional sex refers to exploitative relationships where sex is given in exchange for favors, material objects or money. The centerpiece of the first phase is *RockPoint 256* – a weekly radio serial drama that began airing nationwide in August 2005 on nine radio stations in four languages.

The radio series tells the story of four youth living in a fishing and farming community who become involved in transactional sexual relationships. As the drama evolves, listeners learn about behavior change as the main characters come to understand the consequences of sexual relationships based on inequality rather than mutual respect and love. The radio series promotes abstinence, calling on youth to set long-term goals and not to compromise these goals for material gain. The series also encourages adults to examine their personal roles in protecting young people from sexual exploitation.

**The U.S. President's Emergency Plan for AIDS Relief**

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